



Model United Nations*

The United Nations is the main international organization responsible for promoting world peace. It has played a vital role in disarmament efforts around the world, yet few people really understand how it works. This activity requires you to represent the views of a particular country. There are currently 193 UN members—almost every nation in the world—and each has one vote in the main body within the United Nations, known as the General Assembly. The very first resolution of the General Assembly called for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons. Each year in the fall the General Assembly divides itself into six committees which are responsible for different areas of work. Each state has a representative on each committee. The First Committee deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.

Holding a Model First Committee will teach you the fine art of diplomacy. You will learn about how the United Nations operates and how different countries feel about disarmament issues.

Roles

- President of First Committee—to oversee proceedings and make rulings
- A secretary—to maintain the list of speakers
- A timekeeper—to limit the length of time any delegate has to speak
- Note-passers—to pass official notes between delegates and to the President
- Delegates—to represent their respective countries

Remember delegates should represent the views of their particular country. If you don't know much about the policies of the country you're required to represent, do some research. A useful website is Reaching Critical Will (www.reachingcriticalwill.org), which publishes disarmament speeches made at the UN. The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor (www.the-monitor.org) has country profiles that list every state's position on the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines and the Convention on Cluster Munitions while the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons tracks which states have joined the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (www.icanw.org). The International Network on Explosive Weapons (www.inew.org) has information on states' positions regarding the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

* Adapted from the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons' Learn Peace (2011)

Steps

- Decide which countries should participate in the debate.
- Allocate each participant a country to represent.
- The President should open proceedings and invite any nation to propose a resolution.
- A delegate should introduce a resolution and read it aloud to the General Assembly.
- The President should then invite a delegate from another country to second the proposal.
- All delegates should notify the President if they wish to speak for or against it.
- The secretary should produce a list of speakers, alternating between “for” and “against”.
- The first speaker should be from the delegation that proposed the resolution.
- The timekeeper should ring a bell after a certain time for each speaker, e.g. three minutes.
- At any stage, a delegation can introduce an amendment to the resolution.
- Any amendment should be debated and voted upon.
- The resolution itself should also be voted upon—you can say “for”, “against” or “abstain”.
- The resolution succeeds if there are more countries voting “for” than “against”.
- It is customary to applaud if a resolution succeeds but not if it fails.
- The President should close proceedings or invite another resolution.

To reflect how First Committee works, one or more participant should be assigned to represent civil society. Civil society can speak at the end of the debate but is unable to vote on resolutions.

Representatives of civil society can “work the room” encouraging states to support resolutions, suggesting that states put forward amendments or helping connect states who have similar views.

Drafting Resolutions

The United Nations uses resolutions to express its opinion on issues, to make recommendations on how to address situations, and to apply political pressure on member-states to comply with obligations or expectations agreed upon by the international community.

A resolution is a document composed of a series of clauses, each of which is roughly a couple of lines long. A resolution will contain two types of clause.

The first is called a preambulatory clause. Preambulatory clauses provide context either by summarizing the background to an issue or by articulating the concerns that are motivating the adoption of the resolution. These clauses are where states can show how they feel about the issue.

The second type of clause is the operative clause. This is where the committee states what it thinks should be done. A typical resolution will begin with a number of preambulatory clauses and then follow with a series of operative clauses.

On the following pages, we have drafted three sample resolutions you could use in your activities but you could also try to write your own resolution using the instructions below and our sample resolutions as a template.

Resolutions always begin with four headings:

Committee: - write your committee name (Disarmament and International Security)

Question of: - the issue that you are debating, as it appears in the conference's agenda.

Submitted by: - the country that you are representing (**not** your name).

Co-sponsored by: - leave this one blank. Other countries that merge with, or support, your resolution will add their names here.

The headings are followed by your text. First the Preambulatory clauses and then a line saying First Committee and then the Operative clauses. Do not try and limit yourself with the number of clauses, but aiming to write **five** Preambulatory and **five** Operative might seem like a nice place to start.

Amendments can add clauses to or remove clauses from your resolution, or change the wording of an existing clause.

A note on format, the introductory words for your clauses should be italicized. Also, operative clauses are numbered, while preambulatory clauses are not. Finally, remember that preambulatory clauses end with a comma, while operative clauses end with a semicolon. There is only one period in a Resolution, and it comes at the end. This means that a Resolution is really one very long sentence.

Here are some words that you can use to start clauses in the Preamble

Affirming	Deeply conscious	Fulfilling	Having devoted attention
Alarmed by	Deeply convinced	Fully aware	Realizing
Having considered	Taking note	Fully alarmed	Recalling
Aware of	Noting further	Fully believing	Recognizing
Believing	Deeply disturbed	Further deploring	Having heard
Bearing in mind	Deeply regretting	Further recalling	Having received
Confident	Observing	Welcoming	Keeping in mind
Contemplating	Emphasizing	Seeking	Noting with regret
Convinced	Expecting	Guided by	Noting with satisfaction
Declaring	Having examined	Having adopted	Noting with deep concern
Deeply concerned	Having studied	Having considered further	Desiring
			Referring

Here are some words that you can use to start Operative Clauses

Accepts	Affirms	Further recommends	Encourages
Authorizes	Calls	Further resolves	Further invites
Condemns	Confirms	Proclaims	Further reminds
Regrets	Deplores	Calls upon	Reaffirms
Approves	Emphasizes	Further requests	Reminds
Draws attention	Expresses its hope	Notes	Solemnly affirms
Endorses	Resolves	Recommends	Urges
Further proclaims	Takes note of	Declares accordingly	Considers
	Supports	Requests	Designates

Sample Resolution on Landmines

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its determination to put an end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, which kill or injure thousands of people — women, girls, boys and men — every year, and which place people living in affected areas at risk and hinder the development of their communities,

Believing it necessary to do the utmost to contribute in an efficient and coordinated manner to facing the challenge of removing anti-personnel mines placed throughout the world and to assure their destruction,

Wishing to do the utmost to ensure assistance for the care and rehabilitation, including the social and economic reintegration, of mine victims,

Noting with satisfaction the work undertaken to implement the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction,

Underlining the importance of cooperation and assistance in the implementation of the Convention,

Noting with satisfaction that 162 States have ratified or acceded to the Convention and have formally accepted the obligations of the Convention,

Emphasizing the desirability of attracting the adherence of all States to the Convention, and determined to work strenuously towards the promotion of its universalization and norms,

Deeply concerned that anti-personnel mines continue to be used in some conflicts around the world, causing human suffering and impeding post-conflict development,

1. *Invites* all States that have not signed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction¹ to accede to it without delay;
2. *Stresses* the importance of the full implementation of and compliance with the Convention, including through the continued implementation of the action plan for the period 2014-2019;
3. *Expresses* strong concern regarding the use of anti-personnel mines in various parts of the world, including use highlighted in recent allegations, reports and documented evidence;
4. *Renews* its call upon all States and other relevant parties to work together to promote, support and advance the care, rehabilitation and social and economic reintegration of mine victims, mine risk education programmes and the removal and destruction of anti-personnel mines placed or stockpiled throughout the world;
5. *Urges* all States to remain seized of the issue at the highest political level and to promote adherence to the Convention through bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral contacts;
6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, the sub-item entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”.

Sample Resolution on Nuclear Weapons

The General Assembly,

Reiterating the deep concern about the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons,

Stressing that the immense and uncontrollable destructive capability and indiscriminate nature of nuclear weapons cause unacceptable humanitarian consequences, as has been demonstrated through their past use and testing,

Recalling that concern about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has been reflected in numerous United Nations resolutions, including the first resolution adopted by the General Assembly, on 24 January 1946,

Cognizant that no State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation or provide adequate assistance to victims,

Reaffirming the role of civil society, in partnership with Governments, in raising awareness about the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons,

Emphasizing that the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons affect not only Governments but each and every citizen of our interconnected world and have deep implications for human survival, for the environment, for socioeconomic development, for our economies and for the health of future generations,

Stresses that it is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons never be used again, under any circumstances;

Emphasizes that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is their total elimination;

Stresses that the catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed;

Expresses its firm belief that awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament;

1. *Calls upon* all States that have not yet done so to sign and, thereafter, ratify, accept or approve the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at the earliest possible date;
2. *Reaffirms* that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is an essential contribution towards nuclear disarmament;
3. *Urges* all States to support the rights and needs of victims of nuclear weapons use and testing and to endeavour to remediate environments contaminated by nuclear weapons activities;
4. *Looks forward* to the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and to the First Meeting of its States Parties to be convened thereupon;
5. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons"

Sample Resolution on Explosive Weapons

The General Assembly

Expressing grave concern over the devastation caused by the increasing use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas which has resulted in thousands of casualties, both civilian and military, and, in this regard, stressing the need for all actors to comply with applicable international law at all times,

Expressing profound concern at the indiscriminate use and effects of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas and at the increasing humanitarian impact of such attacks on civilian populations worldwide, in particular through the perpetration of terrorist acts, and noting the need for a comprehensive approach in addressing this concern,

Urging Member States to ensure that any measures taken or means employed to implement the present resolution comply with international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, applicable international humanitarian law and human rights law,

Recognizing the importance of full involvement and equal opportunities for participation for both women and men in countering the humanitarian harm caused by the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas,

Noting the need for increased multilateral cooperation and sharing to provide information on practices that reduce civilian casualties when explosive weapons with wide areas effects are used in populated areas,

1. Invites all parties to consider the appropriate means that may contribute towards the goal of general and complete disarmament and to the reduction of civilian casualties from the use of explosive weapon with wide areas effects;
2. Decides to convene an open-ended working group to substantively address concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to reduce civilian casualties from the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas;
3. Encourages all Member States to participate in the open-ended working group;
4. Decides that the open-ended working group shall convene for up to 10 working days, with the participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society representatives, in accordance with established practice;
5. Calls upon States participating in the open-ended working group to make their best endeavours to reach general agreement;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to render the assistance necessary and to provide such services as may be required for to support the open-ended working group;
7. Decides that the open-ended working group will submit a report of its work to the seventy-third session.